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EDITORIAL

S.P. SCHOOLING.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WITH apologies to the members of the Socialist party's Officialdom when on the war-path after one another's scalps—"this is not headhunting."

The November 17, 1911, issue of the *New York Evening Post* had a letter from a Boston correspondent, who, answering one by Mr. J.G. Phelps Stokes in the November 13 issue of the same paper, took issue with the gentleman for claiming that never was the propaganda of the Socialist party so "revolutionary" and "uncompromising" as this year, and specifically took issue with the gentleman's citing of Pennsylvania and Ohio as the theaters of S.P. revolutionary and uncompromising agitation. The *Evening Post's* Boston correspondent maintained the exact opposite, as a matter of personal observation by him in Ohio and Pennsylvania, besides Schenectady, stating that there was fusion with capitalist parties in all the three places.

The November 21 *Evening Post* had an answer by Mr. Stokes calling for some evidence "in the interest of the truth." While awaiting the evidence, Mr. Stokes categorically denied that the S.P. had fused either in Schenectady, Pennsylvania, or Ohio.

In proof of the S.P. not having fused in Schenectady Mr. Stokes adduced the tabulated election returns, saying "These show conclusively that there was not a single instance of fusion there. Each party had its own candidates. No party endorsed, directly, or indirectly, any candidate of any opposing party."

In proof of the S.P. not having fused in Pennsylvania and Ohio, Mr. Stokes adduced his party's constitution in Connecticut and elsewhere.

The November 29 and December 1 issues of the *Evening Post* contained, respectively, a letter from Rotterdam Junction rebutting Mr. Stokes' denials concerning Schenectady, and one from this city rebutting the gentleman's denials concerning

Ohio and Pennsylvania.

The letter concerning Schenectady was from Dr. G.W. Ensign. It proved Mr. Stokes's "tabulated election returns" to be "defective" and "inconsequential." Hearst's Schenectady County Independent League officially endorsed the Rev. Dr. George R. Lunn, the S.P. mayoralty candidate, and he publicly announced, thereby accepting, the capitalist endorsement, the facts being published in the Albany *Knickerbocker Press* of November 1.

The letter concerning Ohio and Pennsylvania was from Charles H. Chase of this city. It likewise proved Mr. Stokes's evidence inconsequential by reciting from the official sample ballots not less than thirteen instances of S.P. fusion in two States.

With these facts readers of *The People* (Daily and Weekly) have been made acquainted. The only answer possible to the rebuttals was, either straightforward retraction on Mr. Stokes's part; or allegations and proof that the Dr. Ensign and Charles H. Chase documents and facts were false; or, at least silence. Mr. Stokes made none of the three answers. In the *Evening Post* of December 6 the gentleman appeared with another kind of an answer. Which?

As to Dr. Ensign's documentary evidence, that "the Socialist party, through its mayoralty candidate, accepted the endorsement," Mr. Stokes argues that "No such acceptance of endorsement by the party would have been possible without appropriate action to that effect formally taken in convention, or by a committee or individual EMPOWERED to accept such endorsement," and, since there was no such convention or EMPOWERED action, neither was there any fusion.—

In other words, after adducing on November 21, the tabulated returns as showing "conclusively" that there was no fusion in Schenectady, on December 6 Mr. Stokes impeached his own previous testimony. If a convention, or EMPOWERING action, is the determining fact regarding fusion, then the "tabulated election returns" were far from being the "conclusive" evidence that, on November 21, Mr. Stokes cracked them up to be, and upon which he planted himself.

As to Charles H. Chase's documentary evidence of thirteen instances of fusion in specific localities of Pennsylvania and Ohio, Mr. Stokes argues that they prove nothing. Why? Because capitalist politicians resorted to the trickery of placing their nominees on the S.P. ticket—in what places? In Ashtabula, O.; Juniata, Allentown

and the New Bethlehem regions of Pennsylvania, expressly cited by Charles H. Chase? Why, no—of placing their nominees on the S.P. ticket in Lebanon, Pa., a place not charged with fusion.

Nor yet is this all—

In the first letter of the series (*Evening Post*, November 13) above mentioned, the very letter in which Mr. Stokes laid claim to the revolutionary and uncompromising nature of his party's propaganda and its successes in the late campaign, he said: "Bristol, Conn., came within ten votes of electing a Socialist minister to the Mayoralty two weeks ago." And who may this "Socialist minister" be to whom Mr. Stokes refers so boastfully? Let the following passage from Mr. William English Walling's letter in the *Call* of December 9 make answer:

"Taken in connection with the Stitt Wilson episode and other recent events in California, **the action of the candidate for Mayor in Bristol Conn., in putting himself before the people as an 'independent candidate'** (an action condemned by the State Executive Committee), the action of candidates in Paterson, N.J., in presenting themselves to the public as candidates without any statement of their membership in the Socialist party (also condemned by that local), to say nothing of the threatening Missouri situation, it would seem that in many States there is little, if any, respect for the constitution of the party."

So far as we know, Mr. J.G. Phelps Stokes is not a member of the backbiting, slanderous and otherwise unclean Officialdom-and-Press of his party. We have been told he is a person of refinement and college education, a Christian and gentle citizen. If from such a source there can flow such sins against mental integrity, such crack-brained logic and such unethical argumentation, what can be expected from the others?

Elsewhere in this issue is reproduced in full Mr. Stokes's last and most distressful exhibition, above rapidly sketched, in full.

Such is S.P. schooling.

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